A three day holiday follows Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, during which there are great celebrations and much visiting of neighbours to wish them "Eid-Kum Mubarak" (Happy Holiday), the answer to which is "Aadana Allah Ala Amthaleh." On the Eid the Ruler receives visitors at the Palace. The Eid is particularly colourful owing to the bright new clothes which are worn by the children. The boys wear new white thobes and bright-coloured silk caps and the girls proudly appear in gold-decorated dresses. In many cases small boys go calling with their parents, eagerly clutching handfuls of sweets as they leave their various hosts. Local bands, composed of the negro inhabitants of Bahrain, pass through the streets of the towns and villages playing tunes on their locally made instruments. These include many types of drums, flutes, lutes and a local form of bagpipe made from the stomach of a sheep. As the bands of players go from house to house they are tipped by the owners, who often, if they are wealthy, provide a meal for the musicians.

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NEW YEAR'S DAY

It is the custom in Bahrain on New Year's Day of the Christian Calendar for groups of Bahrainis of African origin to form into bands and go playing through the streets of Manama. These men, who to day are the same as all other Bahrainis, are descended from freed slaves or were themselves slaves who escaped to Bahrain and were manumitted. In gratitude for their freedom they thus celebrate New Year's Day. They play first at H.B.M.'s Political Agency and the Adviserate and on leaving these places they split up into smaller parties to serenade their friends. Around Bahrain flags, borne by the leaders of the musicians, these people, both men and women, dance steps and play the music which was brought many centuries ago to Bahrain by their African ancestors. In the music to which they dance the rhythm of the drum plays an important part, but to a European it may seem strange that the drummers frequently leave off playing whenever they feel tired, or if they want to talk to a friend or drink a cup of tea or coffee, and when the distraction is over they again join the band.

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It has occasionally been stated in newspapers and even recently in a book on Bahrain by some one who should know better that slavery still exists not only in the Persian Gulf but also in Bahrain. The celebrations of these Bahrainis at their freedom are proof enough that in Bahrain at least slavery is a thing of the past.

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THE HAJJ

The Hajj is the annual pilgrimage to Mecca which, according to his religion, every Moslem who is able to do so must perform once at least during his lifetime. The pilgrimage takes place during the month of Dhul Hajj. The pilgrims, many of whom have reached Mecca by most hazardous routes, wearing the two white unseamed garments that are mandatory, perform the various rites of the ceremony which includes the circumambulation of the Kaaba, pilgrimages and visits

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205 For those interested in sending food parcels to friends or relatives in England the following facts may be of interest. Not more than one parcel may be sent at any one time to one consignee in England. The total weight of the food parcel may not exceed 18 pounds, and no more than four pounds of any one commodity can be sent. There are no restrictions at present in force regarding the export of foodstuffs from Bahrain.

There are three post offices in Bahrain, one on Prior Road, Manama, a second on Sea Road, Muharraq and a third at Awali.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

527 The following are public holidays in Bahrain :

Every Friday, this is the Moslem sabbath.

New Years Day.

Eid Ramadan, a three days holiday at the end of the month of fasting, in 1953 this feast will fall on the 13th, 14th and 15th June.

Eid al-Hajj, a three days holiday on the 10th 11th and 12th of the Arabic month of Dhul Hajj at the conclusion of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. In 1953 this feast will fall on the 10th, 11th and 12th August.

Ashura, a two days holiday, but not a feast; these days, the 9th and 10th Muharram are when the Shia mourn the death of Hussein at Kerbela. In 1953 this holiday will take place on the 18th and 19th September.

The Prophet's Birthday, the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. In 1953 this feast will take place on 19th November.

Christmas Day.

The dates of Moslem feast days and holidays are based on the Islamic lunar calendar, and consequently *move back ten days each year and eleven days in leap years*.

CALENDAR

305 The official calendar in Bahrain is the Moslem calendar and as stated above, Moslem holidays are based on it. The Moslem months are as follows :

Muharram	Rajab
Safar	Shaban
Rabia al-Awal	Ramadan
Rabia ath-Thani	Shawal
Jamadi al-Awal	Dhul Qada
Jamadi ath-Thani	Dhul Hajj

The Islamic calendar dates from 622 A.D., the year in which the Hijra took place.